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Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SOE-02 AF-10 ARA-10
CIAE-00 EA-10 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NASA-01
NEA-11 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OIC-02 SP-02 PA-01 DOE-15
CEQ-01 OES-07 SS-15 ICA-11 /160 W
----------077375 170107Z /20
R 151618Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3143
DIA WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION GENEVA
USDEL MBFR VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 13812

USMISSION FOR USSALTTWO

DIA SEE PARA 6 FOR IR DATA.

E.O. 11652
TAGS:PARM, MPOL, MBFR, NATO, UR
SUBJECT: SOVIET PRESS PLAY ON EAST'S 8 JUNE MBFR PROPOSAL

SUMMARY: 14 JUNE IZVESTIA CARRIES THE LATEST SOVIET CENTRAL PRESS PLAY REGARDING THE EAST'S 8 JUNE MBFR PROPOSAL. A. GRIGOR'YANTS' ARTICLE, ENTITLED "NEXT - MILITARY DETENTE", REPEATS STANDARD SOVIET LINES ON THE APPROXIMATE EQUALITY OF WARSAW PACT AND NATO FORCES IN EUROPE AND PRAISES THE RECENT EASTERN INITIATIVE ALONG THE LINES FIRST AIRED BY SOVIET COMMENTATORS ON 9 JUNE.

1. THE BULK OF GRIGOR'YANTS' ARTICLE REITERATES FAMILIAR SOVIET COMPLAINTS ABOUT NATO'S VARIED ARMAMENTS
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EFFORTS AND THE WEST'S ALLEGED MANIPULATION OF THE "MYTHICAL" SOVIET MILITARY THREAT TO JUSTIFY ITS OWN MILITARY PROGRAMS AND TO JUSTIFY THE WEST'S "NEGATIVE POSITION" AT THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS IN VIENNA. THE ARTICLE ALSO COMMENTS AT LENGTH ABOUT THE VALUE OF BREZHNEV'S RECENT VISIT TO THE FRG IN ADVANCING DETENTE IN EUROPE.

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2. GRIGOR'YANTS ASSERTS THAT THE WARSAW PACT AND NATO POSSESS "APPROXIMATELY EQUAL STRENGTHS OF THEIR ARMED FORCES - A LITTLE MORE THAN 980,000 MEN ON EACH SIDE". THIS EQUILIBRIUM, GRIGOR'YANTS ADDS, IS NOT FULL EQUALITY, SINCE BOTH SIDES HAVE THEIR OWN STRUCTURE FOR EACH OF ITS ARMED FORCES.

3. TURNING TO THE EAST'S RECENT MBFR PROPOSAL, THE ARTICLE CHARACTERIZES THIS "NEW, CONSTRUCTIVE INITIATIVE" AS FOLLOWS:

-IT CALLS FOR REDUCTION TO A COLLECTIVE CEILING FOR BOTH SIDES OF 900,000 MEN, INCLUDING 700,000 GROUND FORCE PERSONNEL.

-THE EAST EXPRESSED READINESS TO REDUCE THE NUMBERS OF GROUND FORCES AND SELECTED ARMAMENTS IN THE PHASE I REDUCTIONS OF THE US AND USSR ALONG THE LINES CALLED FOR BY THE WEST.

-THE EAST PROPOSES EQUAL PERCENTAGE REDUCTIONS OF SOVIET AND US GROUND FORCES IN PHASE I THAT ARE PROPORTIONAL TO THEIR STRENGTH AS CALLED FOR BY THE WEST.

4. THESE POINTS RAISED BY GRIGOR'YANTS ARE IDENTICAL TO THOSE PRESENTED IN THE INITIAL SOVIET REPORTING
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ON THE EAST'S PROPOSALS WHICH APPEARED IN PRAVDA, IZVESTIA AND RED STAR ON 9 JUNE. IN ADDITION TO THE POINTS REPEATED BY GRIGOR'YANTS NOTED ABOVE, THE 9 JUNE ARTICLES EXPLICITLY NOTED THAT:

- THE EAST'S NEW PROPOSAL IS BASED ON RECOGNITION OF THE APPROXIMATE NUMERICAL EQUALITY OF NATO AND WARSAW PACT ARMED FORCES IN THE REDUCTION AREA.

- THIS INITIATIVE, A RESPONSE TO THE WEST'S 19 APRIL PROPOSAL, CALLED EXPLICITLY FOR PARTICIPATION OF ALL THE DIRECT PARTICIPANT NATIONS IN THE REDUCTION OF THEIR ARMED FORCES AND ARMAMENTS IN PROPORTION TO THEIR MILITARY POTENTIAL.

- THIS CONSTRUCTIVE EASTERN PROPOSAL MAY SERVE AS A TURNING POINT TO GET THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS MOVING TOWARD AGREEMENT.

5. COMMENT: GRIGOR'YANTS' REMARKS ON THE EAST'S 8 JUNE PROPOSAL CONTINUE THE HIGHLY FAVORABLE BUT RELATIVELY LOW KEY TREATMENT THAT THE SOVIET PRESS HAS GIVEN IT

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SINCE THE TABLING OF THE INITIATIVE LAST WEEK. THE SOVIETS HAVE NOW APPENDED IT TO THEIR LIST OF MAJOR ARMS CONTROL PROPOSALS AND APPARENTLY HOPE THAT IT WILL PROVIDE NEW IMPETUS TO THE NEGOTIATIONS.

6. IR DATA: 1. USSR (UR). 2. 6 901 0540 78. 3. SOVIET PRES PLAY ON THE EAST'S 8 JUNE MBFR PROPOSAL (U). 4. OMITTTD. USSR. 8. DKIQ II.A.-1.A AND B. 9. C-5. 10. USDAO MOSCOW USSR (AIRA). 11. NO. 12. E.L. WARNER III, MAJ, USAF, AAIRA-1. 13. L.A. BRACKEN, CAPT, USN, ACTING DATT. 14. OPEN PRESS, PRAVDA, IZVESTIA, RED STAR. 15. NON-DIRC MATLOCK

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Subject: SOVIET PRESS PLAY ON EAST\'S 8 JUNE MBFR PROPOSAL SUMMARY: 14 JUNE IZVESTIA CARRIES THE LATEST SOVIET CENTRAL PRESS PLAY REGARDING THE EAST\'S 8 JUNE MBF
TAGS: PARM, MPOL, SOPN, UR, NATO, MBFR
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Type: TE
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